













MBACM Guide to Retail Interview Attire

As you prepare for interviews in Retail, you may also be contemplating what’s considered “appropriate” interview attire in the industry, which can vary considerably by sector or firm. Business Formal... Business... Business Casual... Smart Casual... Casual... or something else entirely?

We asked Retail recruiters what they expect or recommend candidates wear for an interview with their company. Here’s what they said, *with a visual guide for reference below the table*:

	<p>Suit for both men and women, with tie for men.</p>
	<p>‘Business Formal’. Men can also wear a sport coat, with or without a tie.</p>
	<p>‘Business Formal’ and ‘Business’ are both acceptable. The PMA Program is a leadership development program and we look for candidates to exhibit executive presence in how they present themselves. For interviews we do not expect or ask about specific fragrances/cosmetics, but a knowledge of the Brands / Products and any individual experiences is encouraged.</p>
	<p>Absolutely no suits. Other than that, you cannot go wrong. We want to see your personality through your presentation. Candidates have shown up in jeans (styled very well of course!) and received offers. Wearing Lilly is not a requirement, but if you do wear it, we can’t wait to see what you pair it with!</p>
	<p>We usually advise students to wear Nike casual. For both men and women that would be jeans or khakis with a button-up, polo, or even t-shirt with a blazer and favorite Nike sneakers. We’ve even seen candidates wearing their favorite Nike tops. We won’t necessarily dock candidates for not dressing Nike culture, but it helps us discuss their connection to the brand.</p>
	<p>We like to see anything from business formal to business casual. My favorites from the images below are ‘Business’ for women and ‘Business Formal’ or ‘Business Casual’ for men. I like these because they show a business casual, fashion forward taste.</p>
	<p>We are extremely casual at RBI. Most people wear jeans and often t-shirts as well. For an interview, ‘Smart Casual’ is totally fine.</p>

 UNDER ARMOUR	<p>'Business' or 'Business Casual'. UA attire that consists of polos or nice tops for women is also acceptable. We would NOT recommend compression or gymwear, and would avoid direct competitors including footwear.</p>
 <small>URBAN OUTFITTERS INC.</small>	<p>Candidates can come to interview at URBN casually dressed. We usually tell candidates to 'show us your style'. We dress casually here every day, so that's the appropriate dress code for everyone interviewing as well.</p>
	<p>'Business' or 'Business Casual'. We notice that many MBA students will wear suits, which is completely fine too, however with our culture, it is not necessary. Generally we recommend they wear something that they're comfortable in, so if a suit is something they would feel better interviewing in, that is totally fine.</p>
	<p>'Business Formal' for in-person interviews. 'Business' with a jacket at minimum for virtual interviews.</p>
	<p>'Business' is best.</p>

Additional Tips:

- A good rule of thumb is to look at what employees are wearing (corporate office, retail stores, or ask an alum), then take it up a notch. Button-down shirts, tailored slacks, fitted sweaters, pencil skirts and suit jackets convey professionalism without being over the top.
- If you're interviewing with a fashion-forward retailer, you may want to add a little more "pop" in your attire that appropriately fits the company's aesthetic, or even better, reflects your own personal style.

Visual Reference Guide

DRESS CODES
WOMEN'S



Business - Formal



Business



Business Casual



Smart Casual



Casual

DRESS CODES
MEN'S



Business - Formal



Business



Business Casual



Smart Casual



Casual

Business Formal = Suit It can be a three piece suit, standard slacks and a jacket, skirt suit, or dress suit. Colors tend to be darker (black, navy, charcoal). Fits well (i.e. not be too tight or too baggy), should have full length pants or a knee length skirt, and be worn with a button-up shirt + tie, or formal blouse.

Business = This is more standard “office attire”. On the bottom: slacks or a tailored knee length skirt. On the top: a long-sleeved button up shirt+tie or dress blouse. You can also wear a sweater on top of your shirt if weather requires extra layers. If you’re wearing a tailored dress, you can pair it with a contrasting blazer atop, or blouse underneath. Also includes lighter colored & linen material suits.

Business Casual = On the bottom: slacks, khakis, or knee-length skirt. On the top: short or long sleeved button up (sans tie), polo, blouse, or sweater. You can also wear a more tailored dress. Sweaters and cardigans work well for colder weather, as do more casual blazers.

Smart Casual = In this dress code, you pair a more casual item (jeans) with a more formal item (blazer). Basically the gist is: you look really polished. You may wear more casual materials, but they are all tailored and fit well.

Casual = What you’d wear at home or on the weekend Jeans, a t-shirt and athletic shoes is pretty standard. In the work environment, some things will still be off limits (i.e. showing too much skin), but otherwise you’re free to wear what you want.

Source: <http://macroccs.com/decoding-dress-codes/>

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